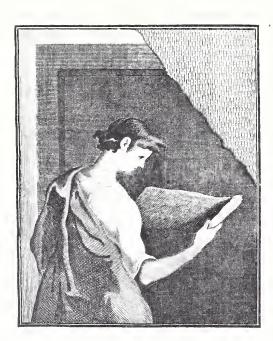
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— With an Essay by ==

ROGER E. FRY

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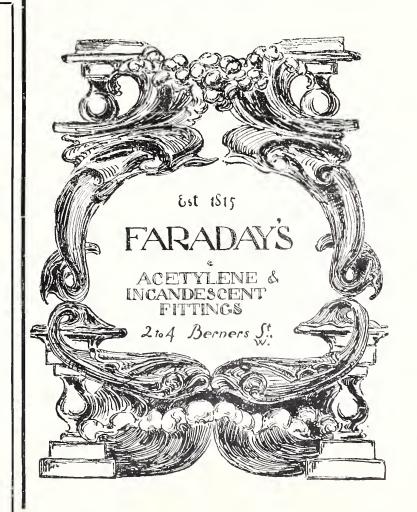
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EXHIBITIONS OPEN DURING AUGUST ...

GREAT BRITAIN:

London:

Royal Academy. Annual Exhibition. (Closes August 5th.)

New Gallery. Annual Exhibition. (Closes August 7th.) A striking portrait of Dr. Warre by Sargent, the landscapes by Peppercorn and East, and a subject picture by Keith Henderson in the balcony deserve special notice.

Royal College of Art, South Kensington. Exhibition of Students' Works.

Brook Street Art Gallery. Silver point drawings by Charles P. Sainton.

Carlton Galleries. Pictures by Old and Modern Masters.

J. Connell and Sons. Etchings by D. Y. Cameron and others.

Doré Gallery. Venetian pictures by Trevor Haddon, R.B.A. Paintings of India, Thibet, and the East, by Mme. Lotus Peratte. Sketches of Cats and Dogs, by Muriel T. Hunt.

Dowdeswells. Miscellaneous collection of Old Masters.

Fine Art Society. The American Pilgrim's Way in England. Water-colours of the Homes and Memorials of Englishmen who have helped to make America, by Elizabeth M. Chettle.

Francis Harvey. French Prints of the eighteenth century.

The International Gallery. Pictures by British Artists.

Leighton House. Two pictures by Lord Leighton recently added to the collection. These are 'Pavonia,' painted at Rome in 1850, and 'The Death of Brunateschi,' Leighton's first important picture.

The Little Gallery. Sea and Landscapes at home and abroad, by Mary L. Breakell.

Messrs, McLean. Forty-third Annual Exhibition of British and Foreign Art.

The Mendoza Gallery. Water-colour Drawings by artists of the English School.

The Newman Art Gallery, 29, Newman Street. Exhibition of Cabinet Pictures, representing various Schools of Modern Painting. (Closes August 10th.)

Shepherd Brothers. Pictures by Gainsborough, Reynolds, Crome Bonington and Daniel Gardner.

Messrs. Tooth and Son Sir L. Alma Tadema's new picture Caraca'la and Geta.

Botton:

Art Gallery, (Closes end of August.)

Brighton:

Collection of Portraits by the late Sir Henry Raeburn. Early Printed Books lent by C. Thomas-Stanford, Esq., F.S.A. Also a collection of Alpine Photographs.

Conway

Royal Cambrian Academy. Permanent collection.

Dublin:

Irish International Exhibition.

Exeter:

Eland's Art Gallery Pictures of the West Country.

Liverpoot:

Walker Art Gallery. Historical Exhibition of Liverpool Antiquities. (Closes August 10th.)

FRANCE:

Paris: Grand Palais. Exposition Internationale du Livre.

1TALY:

Venice: Seventh International Art Exhibition.

GERMANY, AUSTRIA AND SWITZERLAND:

Aix-ta-Chapelle: Suermond Museum: Old and Modern Applied Art. for Church Service. (Opens August 15th.)

Baden-Baden: Badener Salon,

Berlin: Grosse Kunstausstellung 1907 (Lehrter Bahnhof); Secession.

Cobtenz: Kunst und Alterthums Verein.

Coburg: Kunstverein; parts of the Collection of Coburg Castle.

Cotogne: Exhibition of Fine and Applied Arts, 1907.

Düssetdorf: German National Exhibition of Fine Art.

Eisenach: Thüringisches Museum: Mediaeval German Art.

Görlitz: Lusatian Kunstverein. Second half.

Hanover: Kunstverein: Autumn Show.

Innsbruck: Künstlerbund für Tirol und Vorarlberg.

Kartsbad: Salon Stöckl. Klagenfurt: Kunstverein.

Luccrne: Kunstgesellschaft; Kunstverein. (Closes August 18th.)

Manuheim: Jubilee Art and Horticultural Exhibition.

Marienbad: Salon B. Kertzmar.

Munich: Jahresausstellung 1907 (Glaspalast): Secession.

Satzburg: Twenty-third Annual Exhibition.

l'icnna: Hagenbund.

Würzburg: Kunstverein: Works by the famous sixteenth-century sculptor in wood, Tilman Riemenschneider.

UNITED STATES:

New York: Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration. Metropolitan Museum. Museum of the Brooklyn Institute. New York Public Library, Lenox Building. Print Department: Periodical Exhibitions. Gallery, N.Y. Historical Society.

The Exhibition at the New York Public Library contains examples of all the principal modern German original engravers, including a number of specimens of the work of Max Klinger, to whose example modern Germany owes so much. The exhibition, in fact, the strength of the rising generation of German artists, which is becoming such a power upon the continent.

Boston: Museum of Fine Arts. Permanent Collections. Print Department. Periodical Exhibits. Boston Public Library. Monthly Exhibits of Photographs and Illustrations.

Buffato: Allbright Art Gallery, Print Department.

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New Haven, Conn.: Jarves Collection of Early Italian Painting. Trumbull Gallery.

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Pittsburg: Carnegie Institute.

St. Louis, Mo.: Museum of Fine Arts.

Springfield, Mass.: City Library Association Art Museum.

Syracuse, N.Y.: Museum of Fine Arts.

Totedo, O.: Museum of Art.

Washington, D.C.: Corcoran Gallery of Art. Congressional Library. Print Department. Periodical Exhibitions.

Worcester, Mass.: Art Museum.

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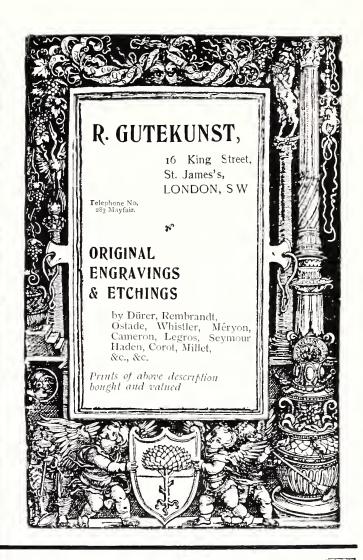


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The following are among the articles which will appear in the September number of The Burlington Magazine:

Art in the Modern Theatre, By HAROLD CHILD.

The Case for Modern Painting, By A MODERN PAINTER. No. V—German Aspirations.

How Dutch Painters Sold their Work, By Dr. W. MARTIN.

The Spires of Rome,

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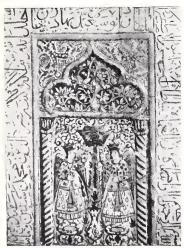
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The Proprietor of "THE CROWN," the Court and County Families Newspaper, having acquired the copyright and all other interests in "Collecting," the Editor begs to announce that all the features that have distinguished "Collecting" as an Art publication have been incorporated in the Art section of "The Crown."

The amalgamation was effected with the issue of "The Crown" for July 20th, and all communications intended for "Collecting" should in future be addressed to the Art Editor of "The Crown,"

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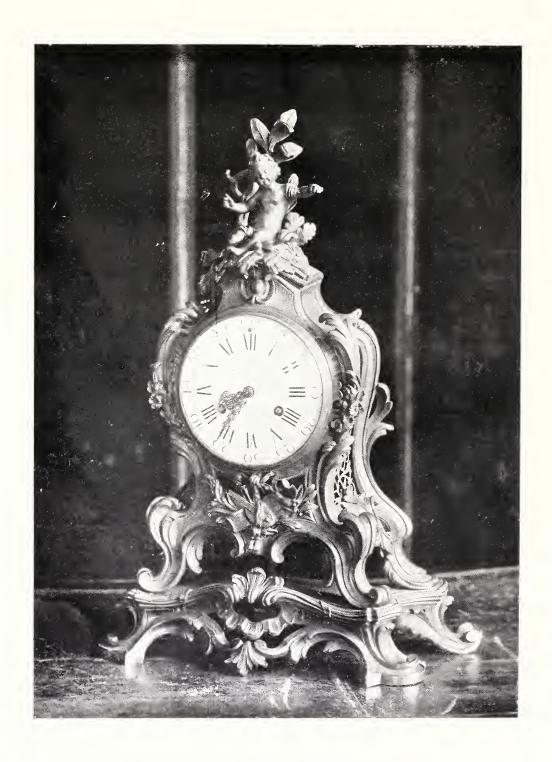
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LANDSCAPE STUDY BY CLAUDE IN THE UNIVERSITY GALLERIES, OXFORD

CLAUDE

BY ROGER E. FRY ሌ

N spite of all the attacks of critics, in spite of all the development of high Aflavour and emphasis of romantic landscape, which might well have spoilt us for his cool simplicity, Claude still lives, not, indeed, as one of the gods of the sale-room, but in the hearts of contemplative and undemonstrative people. This is surely an interesting and encouraging fact. It means that a very purely artistic and poetical appeal stills finds its response in the absence of all subsidiary interests and attractions. The appeal is, indeed, a very limited one, touching only certain highly self-conscious and sophisticated moods, but it is, within its limits, so sincere and so poignant that Claude's very failings become, as it were, an essential part of its expression. These failings are, indeed, so many and so obvious that it is not to be wondered at if, now and again, they blind even a sensitive nature like Ruskin's to the fundamental beauty and grandeur of Claude's revelation. But we must be careful not to count as failings qualities which are essential to the particular kind of beauty that Claude envisages, though, to be quite frank, it is sometimes hard to make up one's mind whether a particular characteristic is a lucky defect or a calculated negation. Take, for instance, the peculiar gaucherie of his articulations. Claude knows less, perhaps, than any considerable landscape painter less than the most mediocre of modern landscapists—how to lead from one object to another. His foregrounds are covered with clumsily arranged leaves which have no organic growth, and which, as often as not, lie on the ground instead of springing from it. His trees frequently isolate themselves helplessly from their parent

soil. In particular, when he wants a repoussoir in the foreground at either end of his composition he has recourse to a clumsily constructed old bare trunk, which has little more meaning than a stage property. Even in his composition there are naïvetés which may or may not be intentional: sometimes they have the happiest effect, at others they seem not childlike but childish. Such, for instance, is his frequent habit of dividing spaces equally, both vertically and horizontally, either placing his horizontal line half-way up the picture, or a principal building on the central vertical line. times this seems the last word of a highly subtilized simplicity, of an artifice which conceals itself; at others one cannot be sure it is not due to incapacity. There is, in fact, a real excuse for Ruskin's exaggerated paradox that Claude's drawings look like the work of a child of ten. There is a whole world of beauty which one must not look for at all in Claude. All that beauty of the sudden and unexpected revelation of an unsuspected truth which the Gothic and Early Renaissance art provides is absent from Claude. As the eye follows his line it is nowhere arrested by a sense of surprise at its representative power, nor by that peculiar thrill which comes from the communication of some vital creative force in the Compare, for instance, Claude's drawing of mountains, which he knew and studied constantly, with Rembrandt's. Rembrandt had probably never seen mountains, but he obtained a more intimate understanding by the light of his inner vision than Claude could ever attain to by familiarity and study. We need not go to Claude's figures, where he is notoriously feeble and superficially Raphaelesque, to find how weak was his hold upon character

in whatever object he set himself to interpret. In the British Museum there is a most careful and elaborate study of the rocky shores of a stream. Claude has even attempted here to render the contorted stratification of the river-bed, but without any of that intimate imaginative grasp of the tension and stress which underlie the appearance which Turner could give in a few hurried scratches. No one, we may surmise, ever loved trees more deeply than Claude, and we know that he prided himself on his careful observation of the difference of their specific characters; and yet he will articulate their branches in the most haphazard, perfunctory manner. There is nothing in all Claude's innumerable drawings which reveals the inner life of the tree itself, its aspirations towards air and light, its struggle with gravitation and wind, as one little drawing by Leonardo da Vinci.

All these defects might pass more easily in a turbulent romanticist, hurrying pell mell to get expressed some moving and dramatic scene, careless of details so long as the main movement were ascertained, but there is none of this fire in Claude. It is with slow ponderation and deliberate care that he places before us his perfunctory and generalized statements, finishing and polishing them with relentless assiduity, and not infrequently giving us details that we do not desire and which add nothing but platitude to the too prolix statement.

All this and much more the admirer of Claude will be wise to concede to the adversary, and if the latter ask wherein the beauty of a Claude lies he may with more justice than in any other case fall back on the reply of one of Du Maurier's aesthetes, 'in the picture.' For there is assuredly a kind of beauty which is not only compatible with these defects but perhaps in some degree depends on them. We

know and recognize it well enough in literature. To take a random instance. Racine makes Titus say in 'Bérénice': 'De mon aimable erreur je suis désabusé.' This may be a dull, weak and colourless mode of expression, but if he had said with Shakespeare, 'Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie, and young affection gapes to be his heir,' we should feel that it would destroy the particular kind of even and unaccented harmony at which Racine Robert Bridges, in his essay on Keats, very aptly describes for literature the kind of beauty which we find in Shakespeare: 'the power of concentrating all the far-reaching resources of language on one point, so that a single and apparently effortless expression rejoices the aesthetic imagination at the moment when it is most expectant and exacting.' That, ceteris paribus, applies admirably to certain kinds of design. It corresponds to the nervous touch of a Pollajuolo or a But Claude's line is almost Rembrandt. nerveless and dull. Even when it is most rapid and free it never surprises us by any intimate revelation of character, any summary indications of the central truth. But it has a certain inexpressive beauty of its own. It is never elegant, never florid, and, above all, never has any ostentation of cleverness. The beauty of Claude's work is not to be sought primarily in his drawing: it is not a beauty of expressive parts but the beauty of a whole. It corresponds in fact to the poetry of his century—to Milton or Racine. It is in the cumulative effect of the perfect co-ordination of parts none of which is by itself capable of absorbing our attention or fascinating our imagination that the power of a picture by Claude It is the unity and not the content that affects us. There is, of course, content, but the content is only adequate to its purpose and never claims our attention on



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its own account. The objects he presents to us have no claim on him but as parts They have no life and purof a scheme. pose of their own, and for that very reason it is right that they should be stated in vagueand general terms. Particularization would spoil the almost literary effect of his presentment. He wishes a tree to convey to the eye only what the word 'tree' might suggest at once to the inner We think first of the mass of waving shade held up against the brilliance of the sky, and this, even with all his detailed elaboration, is about where Claude, whether by good fortune or design, leaves us. is the same with his rocks, his water, his animals. They are all made for the mental imagery of the contemplative wanderer, not of the acute and ardent observer. where Claude is supreme is in the marvellous invention with which he combines and recombines these abstract symbols so as to arouse in us more purely than nature herself can the mood of pastoral delight. That Claude was deeply influenced by Virgil one would naturally suppose from his antiquarian classicism, and a drawing in the British Museum shows that he had the idea of illustrating the Aeneid. any case his pictures translate into the language of painting much of the sentiment of Virgil's Eclogues, and that with a purity and grace that rival his original. In his landscapes Meliboeus always leaves his goats to repose with Daphnis under the murmuring shade, waiting till his herds come of themselves to drink at the ford, or in sadder moods of passionless regret one hears the last murmurs of the lament for Gallus as the well-pastured goats turn homewards beneath the evening star.

Claude is the most ardent worshipper that ever was of the *genius loci*. Of his landscapes one always feels that 'some god is in this place.' Never, it is true, one of the greater gods: no mysterious and fearful Pan, no soul-stirring Bacchus or allembracing Demeter; scarcely, though he tried more than once deliberately to invoke them, Apollo and the Muses, but some mild local deity, the inhabitant of a rustic shrine whose presence only heightens the glamour of the scene.

It is the sincerity of this worship, and the purity and directness of its expression, which makes the lover of landscape turn with such constant affection to Claude, and the chief means by which he communicates it is the unity and perfection of his general design; it is not by form considered in itself, but by the planning of his tone divisions, that he appeals, and here, at least, he is a past master. splendid architecture of the tone masses is, indeed, the really great quality in his pictures; its perfection and solidity are what enables them to bear the weight of so meticulous and, to our minds, tiresome an elaboration of detail without loss of unity, and enables us even to accept the enamelled hardness and tightness of his But many people of to-day, accustomed to our more elliptical and quick-witted modes of expression, are so impatient of these qualities that they can only appreciate Claude's greatness through the medium of his drawings, where the general skeleton of the design is seen without its adornments, and in a medium which he used with perfect ease and undeniable beauty. Thus to reject the pictures is, I think, an error, because it was only when a design had been exposed to constant correction and purification that Claude got out of it its utmost expressiveness, and his improvisations steadily grow under his critical revision to their full But in the drawings, at all perfection. events, Claude's great powers of design are readily seen, and the study of the drawings has this advantage also, that through them we come to know of a Claude whose existence we could never have suspected by examining only his finished pictures.

In speaking of the drawings it is well to recognize that they fall into different classes with different purposes and aims. We need not, for instance, here consider the records of finished compositions in the 'Liber Veritatis.' There remain designs for paintings in all stages of completeness, from the first suggestive idea to the finished cartoon and the drawings from nature. It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to remark that it would have been quite foreign to Claude's conception of his art to have painted a picture from nature. He, himself, clearly distinguished sharply between his studies and his compositions. studies, therefore, were not incipient pictures, but exercises done for his own pleasure or for the fertility they gave to his subsequent invention, and they have the unchecked spontaneity and freedom of hand that one would expect in such unreflecting work. These studies again fall into two groups: first, studies of detail, generally of foliage or of tree forms, and occasionally of rocks and flowers; secondly, studies of general effects. the studies of detail I have already said They have the charm of an something. easy and distinguished calligraphy, and of a refined selection of the decorative possibilities of the things seen, but without any of that penetrating investigation of the vital nature of the thing seen which gives its chief beauty to the best work of this kind.

It is, indeed, in the second group of studies from nature that we come from time to time upon motives that startle and surprise us. We find in these a susceptibility to natural charms which, in its width of range and freedom from the traditional limitations of the art of landscape, is most remarkable. we find not only Claude the prim seventeenth-century classic, but Claude the romanticist, anticipating the chief ideas of Corot's later development¹, and Claude the impressionist, anticipating Whistler and the discovery of Chinese landscape, instance, in the marvellous for aperçu of a mist effect, which we reproduce (plate xiv)². Or, again, in a view which is quite different from any of these, but quite as remote from the Claude of the oil-paintings, in the great view of the Tiber (Plate xiii), a masterpiece of hurried, unconscious planning of of transparent gloom contrasts dazzling light on water and plain. indeed, is so modern in manner that one might mistake it at first glance for a water-colour drawing by Mr. Steer.

The impression one gets from looking through a collection of Claude's drawings like that at the British Museum is of a man without any keen 'feeling for objects in themselves, but singularly open to impressions of general effects in nature, watching always for the shifting patterns of foliage and sky to arrange themselves in some beautifully significant pattern and choosing it with fine and critical taste. But at the same time he was a man with vigorous ideas of the laws of design and the necessity of perfectly realized unity, and to this I suppose one must ascribe the curious contrast between the narrow limits of his work in oil as compared with the wide range, the freedom and the profound originality of his work as a draughtsman.

¹As, for instance, in a wonderful drawing, On the Banks of the Tiber, in Mr. Heseltine's collection.

² It is not impossible that Claude got the hint for such a treatment as this from the impressionist efforts of Græco-Roman painters. That he studied such works we know from a copy of one by him in the British Museum.



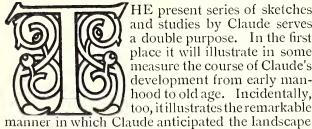
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Among all these innumerable effects which his ready susceptibility led him to record he found but a few which were capable of being reduced to that logical and mathematical formula which he demanded before complete realization could be tolerated. In his drawings he composes sometimes with strong diagonal lines (Ripa Grande, pl. i), sometimes with free and unstable balance. In his pictures he has recourse to a regular system of polarity, balancing his masses carefully on either side of the centre, sometimes even framing it in like a theatrical scene with two repoussoirs pushed in on either side. One must suppose, then, that he approached the composition of his pictures with a certain timidity, that he felt that safety when working on a large scale could only be secured by a certain recognized type of structure, so that out of all the various moods of nature to which his sensitive spirit answered only one lent itself to complete expression. One wishes at times that he had tried more. There is in the British Museum a half-effaced drawing on blue paper, an idea for treating the Noli me tangre which, had he worked it out, would have added to his complete mastery of bucolic landscape a masterpiece of what one may call tragic landscape. It is true that here, as elsewhere, the figures are in themselves totally inadequate, but they suggested an unusual and intense key to the landscape. On the outskirts of a

dimly suggested wood, the figures meet and hold converse; to the right the mound of Calvary glimmers pale and ghost-like against the night sky, while over the distant city the first pink flush of dawn begins. It is an intensely poetical conception. Claude has here created a landscape in harmony with deeper, more mystical aspirations than elsewhere, and, had he given free rein to his sensibilities, we should look to him even more than we do now as the greatest inventor of the motives of pure landscape. As it is, the only ideas to which he gave complete though constantly varied expression are those of pastoral repose.

Claude's view of landscape is false to nature in that it is entirely anthropocentric. His trees exist for pleasant shade; his peasants to give us the illusion of pastoral life, not to toil for a living. His world is not to be lived in, only to be looked at in a mood of pleasing melancholy or suave reverie. It is, therefore, as true to one aspect of human desire as it is false to the facts of life. It may be admitted that this is not the finest kind of art—it is the art of a self-centred and refined luxury which looks on nature as a garden to its own pleasure-house—but few will deny its genial and moderating charm, and few of us live so strenuously as never to feel a sense of nostalgia for that Saturnian reign to which Virgil and Claude can waft us.

NOTES ON THE DRAWINGS REPRODUCED A



HE present series of sketches and studies by Claude serves a double purpose. In the first place it will illustrate in some measure the course of Claude's development from early manhood to old age. Incidentally, too, it illustrates the remarkable

work of almost all the masters of the art who

succeeded him. Commenting on the drawings, it is easy to discuss these two aspects of the master's art at the same time; indeed, by so doing, we are materially aided in gaining a clear idea of the course of his progress.

The history of art as a whole bears a singular relation to the development of great individual artists. The great artist has his primitive period, in which his work is stiff and precise, just as painting itself was stiff and precise almost to the close of

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the fifteenth century. He then enters upon the period in which his works are, perhaps, most perfect, when the precision of his youth is tempered with the freedom of perfected skill. An analogous stage is reached by every school of art in its maturity. Last, as the artist approaches old age, his work, if he be a great man, becomes emancipated from all current rules and theories of conception and technique. His composition becomes unrestrained, his handling more loose. A similar character will be found in all schools of painting that have passed their period of full strength. The painters who have not originality copy their predecessors; those who have originality express themselves with more fluency but with less sharpness of vision.

The sketches of Claude are of the utmost variety, and, as we have seen, seem to anticipate from time to time the qualities obtained by many of his successors. We shall not, therefore, be far wrong, perhaps, if we conclude that their relative chronological order is analogous to that of the dates at which the respective artists whom he resembles lived and worked, and to conclude that a drawing resembling a work of Gainsborough is later than one which resembles the work of Poussin; and that a drawing which recalls the Impressionists of the nineteenth century comes later still. Such dated sketches as we possess on the whole bear out this assumption, though it must always be remembered that the assumption applies only to sketches and studies from nature. Claude the sketcher is, in fact, a different person from Claude the designer of classical compositions; and the principle which guides us in dating the former class of work is not applicable to the latter.1

L

That the first sketch of shipping represents Claude's style at the very opening of his career in Rome is indicated, not only by a certain tentative quality in the workmanship, but also by external evidence. Among not the least interesting drawings in Mr. Heseltine's splendid collection are certain pages of blue paper from one of Claude's early sketch-books, and on the back of one of them (No. 3) is a study of a boat, the deck covered with the sailors and awning, and with the inscription 'Etude faite à Ripa Grande.' The coincidence, both of the subject and of the inscription, with the drawing in the British Museum, together with the resemblance to his countryman Callot which we notice in the figures, makes it clear that we have here an example of Claude's earliest style. Those who know his history will remember how largely marine subjects figured during the first portion of his career, so that on all grounds we may assume that this drawing represents his

¹ To those who wish to make a more detailed study of Claude the little biography by Mr. Edward Dillon, published in Messrs. Methuen's half-crown series, can be heartily recommended.

powers at the time he settled in Rome, after his Wanderjahre, that is to say, about the year 1630. We do not, of course, see here the same mastery of aerial perspective which we find in the latter drawings; the contrast between the boats, the buildings and the sky behind them is too forced; yet already we may trace that feeling for effects of misty sunlight which Claude afterwards developed.

Н

The next study is one of those sketches to which a reproduction cannot do full justice. The trees are sketched in a reddish-brown pigment which conveys by itself the impression of strong illumination, while in the background one or two touches of cooler grey give the hills by contrast a tone of rich purple. This device, by which an effect of rich colour is suggested without the use of colour, is one that we often find in Claude's work. He will make his drawing in some warm tone of brown, and then delicately work over the distance in black and white, gaining from the play of the cool tone with the warm one a richness and subtlety comparable with that of an elaborate oil painting. A similar effect is occasionally found in the sketches of other great masters, but it was used most consistently perhaps by Gainsborough, whose landscape studies almost always convey the sense of fine colour without the use of a single positive hue.

 Π

The third drawing is a thing of special interest in the study of Claude. Not only may it be taken as an example of his studies of the ruins of Rome which were the foundation of the classical architecture introduced into his mythological pictures, not only is it an admirable example of his art, but it is also interesting in relation to his accuracy as a topographical draughtsman. It is evident that the building on the right of the drawing is the arch of Constantine, its base heaped with grass-grown rubbish on which sheep are grazing. When we look at the distance, however, we begin to find ourselves in a difficulty. The buildings on the hill to the left may, by some stretch of the imagination, be taken to represent the temple of Venus and Rome, and the basilica of Constantine; but the houses which, as we know from other contemporary evidence, surrounded them in Claude's day are all obliterated, and, instead of the centre of a still populous Rome, we are presented with a scene of utter desolation. That the interval between the foreground and the middle distance should be filled by a pool of water is another concession to the demands of the picturesque. As all who know Rome will recognize, its place in the Rome of reality is occupied by the slope which leads up to the arch of Titus. At the foot of that slope nearest to the arch of Constantine lie the remains of the fountain of the Meta Sudans, while on the far side



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of the slope the basilica of Constantine overlooks the forum where, some thirty or forty feet below the Renaissance level of the ground, modern archaeological enterprise has discovered traces of the pool round which the earliest settlements on the site of Rome were built. Claude's drawing, therefore, cannot be regarded as in any way an accurate representation of Rome as it was in his day; it is merely an improvisation on a Roman theme, an essay on the desolation of Italy, rather than a view of a real place. In the precision of the pen-work and the care with which the details of the arch of Constantine are interpreted, we recognize some survival from the manner of his earliest time, in which he relied almost entirely upon careful work with the pen. In this drawing, however, the dryness of this early manner is mitigated by masterly use of the brush, so that the outlines of the distance are blended by delicate tones with the paper on which they are drawn, while the wiry harshness of the stronger pen lines in the foreground is modified by lavish use of wet colour so skilfully varied in quality that it is everywhere transparent and luminous.

IV

Having said thus much as to the degree of accuracy we may expect from Claude as a topographer, it would be rash to speak too positively as to the place depicted in the next sketch. The varied species of the trees perhaps indicate rather the neighbourhood of a city and of gardens, but even then we have no means of deciding the locality. We must content ourselves with noticing how clear and fresh is the impression of sunlight conveyed, how direct and simple the method of expression, how free from all the then prevalent notions of manipulating nature. It is, indeed, just the sort of study that might have been made by some good English artist in the early part of the nineteenth century, except that the articulation of the boughs is not observed as a modern master would observe it.

V

In the olive garden represented in the following drawing we are brought face to face with nature in a more serious mood. This is one of the sketches in which Claude has worked in black and white on the top of a drawing made in brown, producing that impression of rich sober colour to which we have previously referred, but thereby making the effect something which the camera cannot reproduce. Nevertheless, the engraving may give some idea of the beauty of this sketch. It is a cloudy evening, but a burst of sunlight has broken through the clouds and has for a moment turned to splendour a scene of no great intrinsic attraction. It is with the name of Rubens and with the stormy days of autumn that we associate

these sudden splendours rather than with the spirit of Claude and the tranquil sky of Italy.

VI

The little sketch which forms part of the collection of drawings in the Oxford University Galleries conveys the same impression, blended, it is true, with a more tempestuous wind and a wider horizon. In connexion with this study, it may not be amiss to mention the four drawings at Oxford which are reproduced in facsimile. Of these, the two views of towns are perhaps the earliest in date. Both exhibit in perfection the qualities on which Claude's mastery of landscape is based, his feeling for the modelling of the ground, his love of winding lines which lead the eye insensibly yet with infinite variety from the foreground into the distance, that preference for country once populated by man but now almost deserted which is the keynote of so much of his most intimate work. As with Piranesi, the figures who move in the landscapes of Claude are rarely contemporary with the buildings around them. Like Claude himself, they are but spectators of the ruins of former grandeur, they seem to lead only a butterfly existence under its shadow. It will be noticed how in these drawings the touch of Claude has become more free; the pen line is no longer hard and crisp but is delicately blurred either by working on paper already damped, or by a subsequent softening with the brush. This quality is specially noticeable in the romantic study of a woodland glade where an opening reveals to us an expanse of calm water bounded far away by a low range of hills over which the sun is setting. Here (as in No. XVI) three-quarters of the composition are only a framework for an exquisite passage of distance. We may note how careful the artist has been to subdue the incisiveness of his pen stroke by blurring it everywhere in the shadows, so that no importunate detail may distract our eyes from the passage he desires to emphasize. The treatment, in fact, is really the same as that employed in the fourth drawing, where a shadowed watercourse flows out into a quiet lake: a sketch in which both brush and chalk are used together to produce strength of tone and soft play of light without the intrusion of any sharp lines to detract from the effect of misty evening light under which the scene is viewed.

VII

If we now turn to the next illustration, a study of a tree fallen into a river, made during one of Claude's excursions to Tivoli, we shall notice how the general mass and sweep of the foliage, together with the forms of the landscape in the background, are blocked out with loose strokes of the brush, but the portion of the subject which the artist was most keenly bent on recording, the bough trailing in the water, is drawn with the

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pen, vigorously yet with an eye for detail and structure which Claude does not always show.

VIII

In this study we see an increased complexity of method. The subject seems first to have been faintly indicated with the brush, then to have been carried out in black chalk, and finally once more strengthened with a few vigorous touches of wet colour. It is thus analogous to the landscape studies of Gainsborough in method as well as in feeling and execution. Indeed, it resembles Gainsborough so closely in its technique that it might well pass for a study by him, although a student who is intimately acquainted with Gainsborough would probably find it difficult to give the drawing a date, since the close reliance upon nature which underlies it is found only in Gainsborough's early work, while the exquisite freedom of touch and breadth of style which it displays were achieved by him only in middle life, when he had few or no oppor-tunities of working in the open air. The drawing cannot claim to be a complete composition, or to be a thing of extraordinary beauty, yet it is the work of a master in that it expresses perfectly the things it sets out to express, the mysterious charm of a road running deep between tree-clad banks, a charm obtained by that elimination of unnecessary detail which is the hall-mark of all good craftsmanship.

IX

If the drawing of the hollow road might be compared with Gainsborough, this sepia sketch of rocks and trees might with equal justice be compared with the works of the English water-colourists of the early part of the nineteenth century. It exhibits just the same facile, confident use of the medium, just the same perception of the obvious relations of sunshine and shadow. Perhaps it might be charged with the same defect, namely a certain materialism of attitude which is content with a clever record of some casual natural effect, and does not attempt to be more than clever. Had Gainsborough or Rembrandt approached such a subject, he would infallibly have endowed it with some new quality of air or distance or mystery which would make the rocks and trees symbols of something much more than they actually are, would have enveloped them in the atmosphere of a wider and more significant universe, and we should forget that there was such a thing as skilful manipulation of wet colour in our delight at the profound sensation with which the drawing inspired us. This materialism is not uncommon in Claude's work, and goes far to explain the faults of his pictures. It is evident that he was by nature a man of profound feeling, but his feeling was superior to his character. When his inspiration was uninterrupted he could be a fine emotional artist, but his mind was not

strong enough to resist the allurements of facile success, the criticism of a less gifted friend, or the tastes of a patron. Men of great independence of mind, like Rembrandt, constantly make mistakes, but they do so deliberately, as an inventor may sometimes waste his time in following up a false scent. The failings of Claude cannot be assigned to any such honourable cause.

X

In the sketch which follows, we see Claude working untrammelled, with a good taste and profundity that are almost worthy of Rembrandt. The slightly conventional silhouette of the foliage to the left is the one passage in which we can still recognize his limitations, but the suggestion of the great wall rising on the right and screening all but a glimpse of the sunlit hills in the distance has a boldness and massiveness that are rare in the landscape design of any country or of any period. Translated into solid paint, it would need the genius of a Rembrandt to match the play of broken tones and reflected lights which make this sketch a little masterpiece of chiaroscuro. It is, indeed, in company with the work of Rembrandt that it deserves to be studied.

\mathbf{X}

If dignity was the keynote of the previous drawing, then the keynote of the present one is romance. The famous picture of *The Enchanted* Castle in the Wantage collection is Claude's supreme achievement as a painter in oil, and in itself is sufficient to place him among the great creative landscape artists. Yet such a drawing as that before us, if small things may be compared with great, may fitly be compared with the Wantage picture. Here Claude transports us into an ideal Italy—not the Italy of wide plains, white walls and quiet sunshine that we find in his paintings, as in those of his great follower, Corot, but an Italy which we might hope to discover even now, in some remote district from which the stirr and stress of active life have long passed away. We feel that if we could but leave railways and all other means of conveyance far behind, and follow the less travelled stretches of the Italian coast line, we might in some fortunate moment come across just such a quiet little bay, with just such jutting cliffs, with just such a little mouldering tower on the far headland, and with just such an uncertain sky brooding over it all. A few of the felicitous little studies by Guardi of islets forgotten among the Venetian lagoons touch the same lonely note. The best landscape painters of Holland try for it, but with infrequent success. It is, in fact, one of the few veins of landscape sentiment which might still be explored with

XII

In this broadly executed sketch of *Tivoli*, we see Claude once more anticipating the style of later











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PLATE VI



PLATE V



PLATE VII



PLATE VIII

PLATE VII. A TREE IN THE RIVER AT TIVOLI. FROM THE DRAWING BY CLAUDE IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM PLATE VIII. A ROAD BETWEEN HIGH BANKS. FROM THE DRAWING BY CLAUDE IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM







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On this occasion the analogy is with Girtin and Crome, in whose art we see the same large, solemn view of nature expressed with the same force and simplicity of means. One cannot help feeling a regret that Claude should not have attempted to carry out in the more solid and substantial medium of oil some of these broad conceptions which he realized so completely in water-colour. Whatever our admiration for his skill as an oil painter, we cannot help recognizing that his brush-work is somewhat petty, that his masses are too frequently broken up, too consistently fretted with small details, so that it is only on rare occasions, as in the superb Acis and Galatea at Dresden, that we find him dealing with large things in a large way; and, even there, the fashion of the day or the imperfection of his taste admits the introduction of importunate little figures in the foreground. These figures, it is true, are said to have been re-painted with additions by another hand, but the mere fact of their being introduced at all shows that the artist was not strong enough, as Crome and Girtin were, to throw aside convention, and to leave the great solitudes of nature to tell their own story.

XIII, XIV, XV

These three studies introduce us to an even more advanced stage in the history of art. Something in this marvellous bird's-eye prospect may remind us of Rembrandt; something, perhaps, of the spreading plains which Turner loved to paint; but the style is that of a generation later even than Turner. When Ruskin uttered his famous denunciations of Claude in 'Modern Painters,' he joined with them abuse of what he termed 'blottesque landscape.' Little, I think, could he foresee that the loose style of workmanship which he then condemned would, before the end of his life, be the generally accepted manner of artistic sketching, and that this seemingly incoherent method of expression would be found more decorative and infinitely more suggestive than the minute statement of details that he practised and preached. In the house of art there are many mansions, and we are being compelled to recognize more and more that we may without inconsistency visit them all. Yet it is remarkable that it should have been reserved for Claude to anticipate so completely a style of technical work and a form of artistic vision which the other landscape painters of Europe did not reach till two hundred and fifty years after his death.

Still more definitely impressionistic is the next study, in which the charm of misty moonlight is enlivened and contrasted with artificial illumination. It is a sketch which could be hung in a show of modern English or continental work under the name of half a dozen artists one can remember, without the spectator guessing for a

moment that the drawing was two centuries old and more.

The sketch of a woodland glade with a vague country scene beyond it is equally modern, and if we did not know from its place in the British Museum and its history that it was a work by Claude, we might pardonably recognize in it a sketch by Mr. Sargent or Mr. Wilson Steer. Indeed, it is the existence of sketches such as this that makes Claude such a difficult figure to understand. How was it that a man who could see nature so independently, and learn to report his impressions so boldly, did not, as a painter, show a trace of this boldness? We can only attribute the failure to lack of character. Nevertheless, in judging his achievement as a whole, the extraordinary gifts displayed in his sketches cannot be set on one side, and if we count them, we are almost compelled to admit that Claude's natural disposition for landscape was not inferior to the reputation he once held in Europe.

XVI, XVII

The three large drawings which follow indicate the use which Claude made of the detached studies from nature which we have been considering. Nos. XVI and XVII are both in Mr. Heseltine's collection, and are reproduced here by his kind The collection at the British permission. Museum is far larger, but contains a good deal that is not of the first importance. Mr. Heseltine's collection, on the other hand, is a collection of picked examples, covering the whole period of Claude's career, and including some of his very earliest known drawings, but especially strong in the work of his mature period (1660-1665), when his art was at his best. The first drawing we have to consider, No. XVI, is of singular majesty in the disposition of its masses, but we cannot help feeling that these solemn trees and rolling foreground which occupy so much of the picture's space are, as in the Oxford drawing already mentioned, only a framework for the exquisite glimpse of the distance which they permit us to see—a quiet sheet of water, bordered by low hills beyond which sunlit mountains rise sheer into the evening sky. The abrupt forms of these mountains suggest the Dolomites rather than the softer outlines of the mountains that look down on the Roman Campagna. Here indeed, as in many other passages in Claude's work, we must recognize how largely he was influenced by the work of other artists, and how skilfully he assimilated the hints of

novel scenery which they gave to him.

The next drawing, too (XVII), has nothing specifically Italian about it. The movement and nature of the cloud forms, the moisture with which the air is laden, and the group of castellated ruins on the right to which the whole composition sweeps upwards, are so definitely northern in character that we are once more reminded of the art of

Notes on the Drawings Reproduced

Gainsborough. Again, as in Gainsborough's work, we find Claude getting a suggestion of actual colour by working in black and white on the top of a drawing executed in brown. As in the earlier drawings where this practice was noticed, the effect is one of singular richness, so that, although the actual tones before us are no more than grey and brown, the mind is instinctively compelled to colour the composition with the rich tones of sunset in which the similar compositions of Rubens and Gainsborough are enveloped. the artist of to-day such drawings may not always appeal strongly, since the eye may be repelled by much that is formal and conventional in the building up of the composition, and by the generalization of natural forms which made Ruskin so angry. Yet there is a place for art that has no relation to photographic appearances, just as there is a literature which has nothing to do with the statement of facts such as may be found in the daily paper; and those who have still sufficient imagination to appreciate a literature which is not a literature of facts (if, indeed, journalism can be so termed) may also be able to enjoy the beauty and romance of these drawings of Claude, and to make allowance for their artifice.

XVIII

In the last subject reproduced no such allowance at all is necessary. In this sketch for a composition representing apparently the Tower of Babel we are dealing with a world which is entirely a world of the imagination. To this place of cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces we need not apply the tests of common realism any more than we apply them to Prospero's island, but can abandon ourselves to

sheer delight in the prospect of wide plains and giant architecture which stretches before us. The artist will note the skill with which the eye is led away across the level country to the huge erection that rises literally into the sky, will admire the subtlety with which the vast height and massive bulk of the towering buildings on the right are suggested, and will perhaps regret that Claude did not carry out this stupendous conception in paint. Yet we may wonder whether the realization of such an idea is possible in paint; whether the artist was not wise to leave it as a suggestion. In painting even the most skilful artist is to some extent subject to accidents of material, to the necessity of representing positively much at which a sketch needs only to hint. If we remember how few paintings of a highly imaginative nature can be termed unqualified successes, we may recognize that Claude was perhaps right in leaving this idea in the form of a sketch, where the imagination of the spectator, if attuned to the subject, would inevitably supply all that was required to complete the picture, without the help of any of those importunate details which, when materialized in an oil painting, are apt to distract the attention and weaken the design.

Once more, the analogy with the work of certain northern artists will not fail to strike those who are conversant with the history of landscape, but in this case, as in that to which we previously referred, this exotic element is so blended and fused with the breadth of view and stability of construction that are characteristic of all good Italian work that we can accept it without the reservations which we are compelled to make before the imaginative landscapes of Flanders and Germany.

C. J. H.

PLATE XI. A TOWER ON THE COAST, FROM THE DRAWING BY CLAUDE IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM







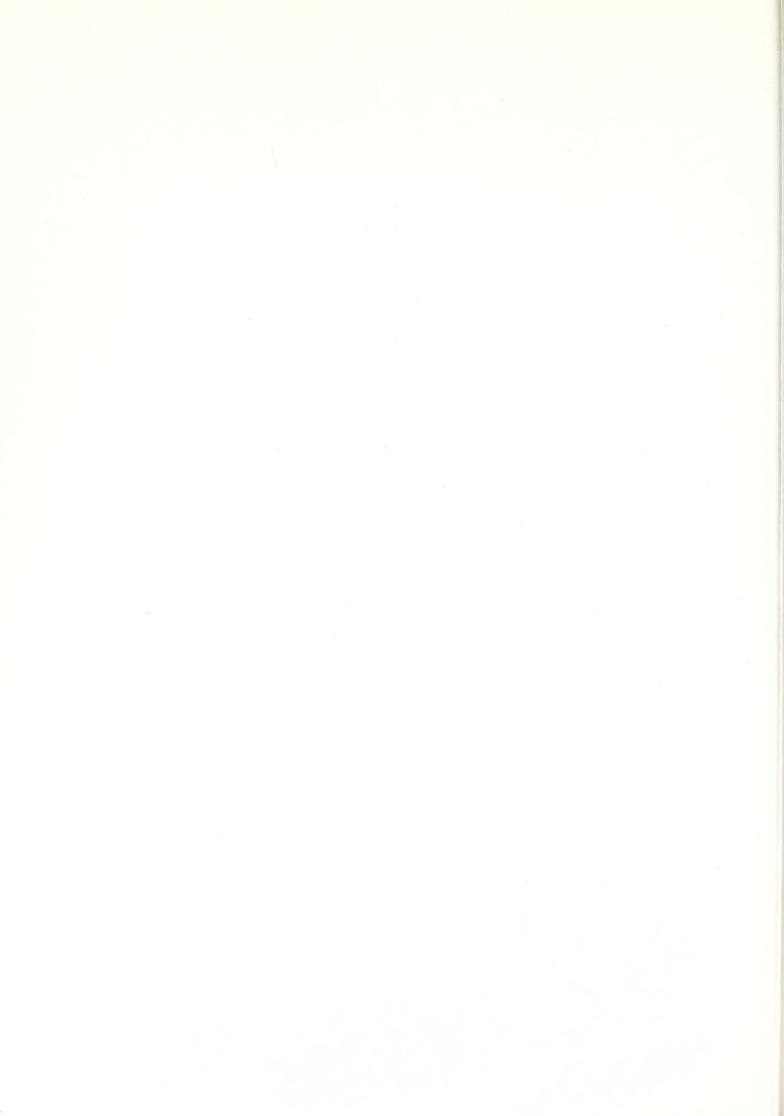






PLATE XIV. NOCTURNE. FROM THE DRAWING BY CLAUDE IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

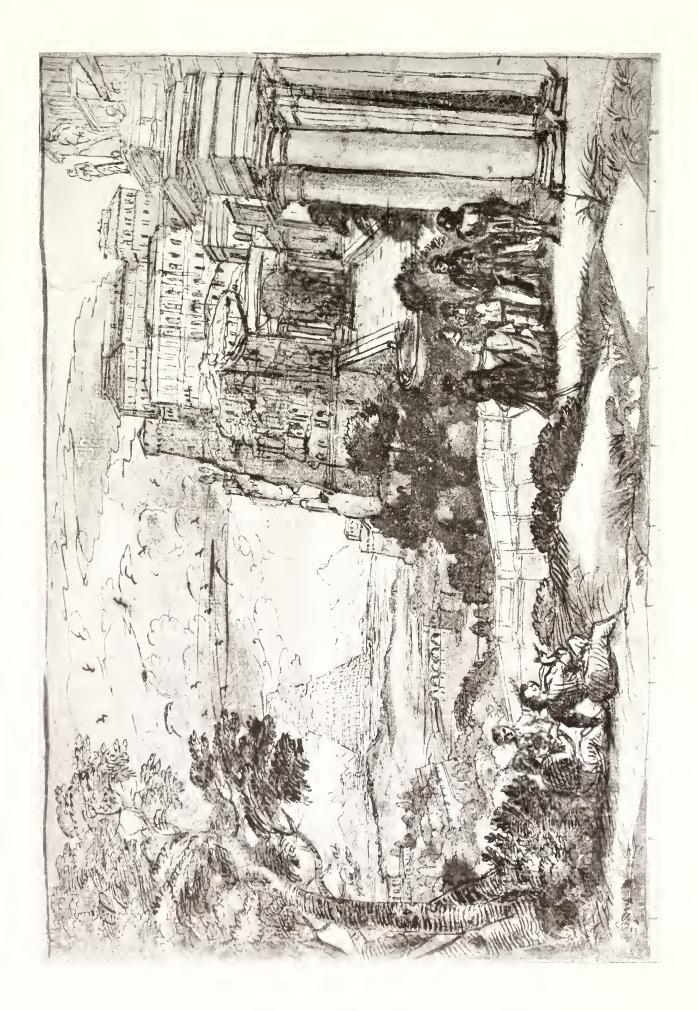






PLATE XVII. LANDSCAPE COMPOSITION, FROM THE DRAWING BY CLAUDE IN THE COLLECTION OF MR. J. P. HESELTINE (NO. 33)





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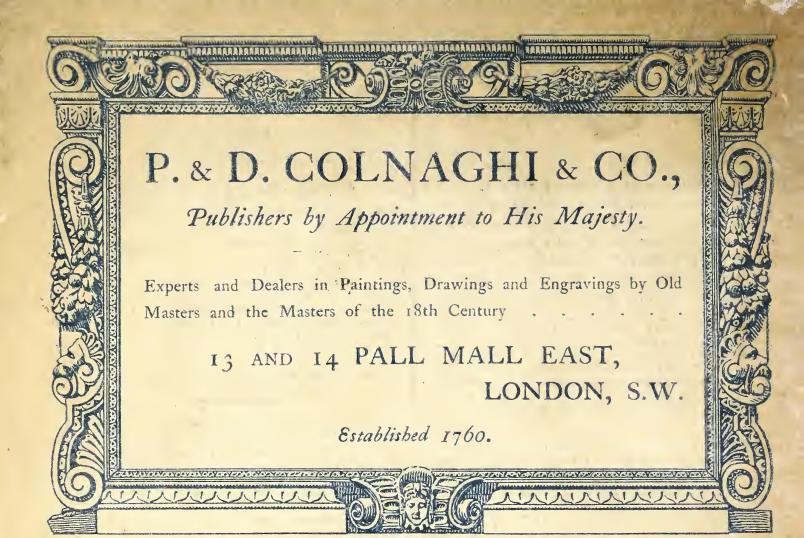
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